

vention of duelling, your committee turned their attention to an analysis of the principles upon which it is founded. The principles of honor adorn the character of man, and animate in the pursuit of what is noble and excellent; but when not *properly directed*, are productive of the worst consequences. The object of the duellist is entirely personal, being either to gratify passion or to avoid the imputations of cowardice;—he is, therefore, *selfish*, and the means by which he attains his object are contrary to law, reason and religion, for he takes the law in his own hand, and acts as judge in his own cause. On account of some unguarded word, or trifling offence, he risks his own life, and involves, perhaps, in wretchedness, a wife and family, who depend on him for subsistence. If he is reminded of these circumstances, of forgiveness, patience and forbearance, he claims the right of revenge with the ferocity of a savage; and thus duelling is supported by pride—for *honor*, in its fashionable sense, is pride modified by whimsical rules. Your committee cannot forbear to quote the words of Paley on this subject; he says:—"The law of honor is a system of rules constructed by people of fashion, and calculated to facilitate their intercourse with one another, and for no other purpose. It prescribes and regulates the duties betwixt equals, *omitting* such as relate to the Supreme Being, as well as those which we owe to our inferiors. For which reason, profaneness, neglect of public worship or private devotion, cruelty to servants, rigorous treatment of tenants or other dependants, want of charity to the poor, injury done to tradesmen by insolvencies, or delay of payment, with numberless examples of the same kind, are accounted no breaches of honor, because a man is not a less agreeable companion for these vices, nor the worst to deal with in those concerns which are usually transacted between one gentleman and another. Again, the law of honor being constituted by men occupied in the pursuit of pleasure, and for the mutual convenience of such men, will be found, *as might be expected* from the *character* and design of the law makers, to be, in most instances, favorable to the licentious indulgence of the natural passions. Thus it allows of fornication, adultery, drunkenness, prodigality, *duelling*, and revenge in the extreme, and lays no stress upon the virtues opposite to these."

This custom, originating in a period of ignorance and superstition, has maintained its ground amidst all the improvements of society, and has come to our times with unabated force; and an effort to check it is due to society, by rigidly enforcing the laws that are now in existence against it; for there is no probability of its correcting itself, unless it descends to slaves and helots, who, instead of having their disputes settled for them, might be allowed to meet, not in the cotton, sugar, rice or corn field, but on the bloody field of honor: and thus, those who consider themselves, *par excellence*, the great, might renounce it as servile, dishonorable, and (what is to them of greater consideration,) unfashionable, so that, losing their sanction, it might gradually